

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6468

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

CINCLANT FOR POLAD

COMCARIBSEAFRON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRIDGETOWN 1709

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, GJ

SUBJ: TWENTY-TWO ORGANIZATIONS DEMAND GAIRY'S RESIGNATION

REF: BTN 1650

SUMMARY: REPRESENTATIVES OF TWENTY-TWO ORGANIZATIONS IN GRENADA HAVE THREATENED GENERAL STRIKE IF GOVERNMENT OF PREMIER ERIC GAIRY DOES NOT RESIGN BY DECEMBER 27. THREE MEN HAVE BEEN CHARGED BY LOCAL COMMISSION INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS OF POLICE BRUTALITY. IN LONDON, HOUSE OF COMMONS HAS APPROVED DRAFT ORDER GRANTING GRENADA FULL INDEPENDENCE ON FEBRUARY 7. END SUMMARY.

1. COMMITTEE REPRESENTING TWENTY-TWO ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING TRADE UNIONS, CIVIL SERVANT, TEACHERS, SERVICE CLUBS AND FOUR MAJOR RELIGIOUS DENOMINATIONS, REPORTEDLY MET DECEMBER 11 AND ADOPTED NO CONFIDENCE RESOLUTION AGAINST GRENADE GOVERNMENT. COMMITTEE ENDORSED A TOTAL SHUTDOWN OF BUSINESSES AND SERVICES UNLESS GOG RESIGNS BY DECEMBER 27. PLANS FOR RESUMED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STRIKE ON DECEMBER 12 IN PROTEST OF POLICE BRUTALITY HAVE

APPARENTLY BEEN SCUTTLED IN VIEW OF NEW DEMAND. ACCORDING TO REUTER'S RELEASE, COMMITTEE CHARGED THAT GOG HAS FAILED TO MEET EARLIER DEMANDS FOR DISBANDING OF "POLICE AIDES" AND ENDING INDISCRIMINATE SEARCHES BY POLICE. DECEMBER 27 DATE WAS CHOSE BECAUSE TWO KEY PARTICIPANTS, THE CIVIL SERVICE ASSOCIATION AND THE TECHNICAL AND ALLIED WORKERS' UNION (TAWU), REQUIRED BY LAW TO GIVE 14-DAY NOTICE OF WORK STOPPAGE. TAWU CONTROLS WORKERS IN ELECTRIC, WATER, TELEPHONE, CABLE AND AIRLINE SERVICES. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND MEDICAL AND LAW SOCIETIES ALSO SAID TO BE COMMITTED TO PROPOSED SHUTDOWN.

2. THREE MEN HAVE REPORTEDLY BEEN CHARGED BY LOCAL COMMISSION, HEADED BY ATTORNEY GENERAL HERBERT SQUIRES, ESTABLISHED TEN DAYS AGO TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OF POLICE BRUTALITY. ONE IS A CIVILIAN CHARGED WITH HARMING J POLICE AIDE. NO ARRESTS WERE MADE IN CONNECTION WITH NOVEMBER 18 ARREST AND BEATING OF SIX NJM LEADERS, WHICH SPARKED ORIGINAL PUBLIC PROTEST AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY.

3. IN LONDON, HOUSE OF COMMONS HAS APPROVED DRAFT ORDER GRANTING GRENADA FULL INDEPENDENCE ON FEBURARY 7. ORDER MUST NOW GO TO HOUSE OF LORDS FOR PASSAGE AND TO THE QUEEN FOR SIGNATURE. DURING COMMONS DEBATE, LABOUR MP GORONWY ROBERTS REPORTEDLY QUESTIONED FCO MINISTER LORD BALNEIL ON USE OF ORDERS-IN-COUNCIL PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING INDEPENDENCE, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF ALLEGATIONS BY GRENADA OPPOSITION THAT SERIOUS IRREGULARITIES OCCURRED DURING 1972. ELECTIONS. BALNEIL REPLIED THAT HMG BELIEVES GOG HAS POPULAR SUPPORT IN SEEKING INDEPENDENCE, THAT ELECTIONS WERE AS WELL RUN AS COULD BE EXPECTED IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THAT LATEST REPORTS INDICATED INTERNAL SECURITY SITUATION IN GRENADA HAS IMPROVED.

4. COMMENT: DEMAND FOR GAIRY'S RESIGNATION, HERETOFORE ADVOCATED ONLY BY NJM, IS SIGNIFICANT AND SOMEWHAT UNEXPECTED TURN OF EVENTS. CLEARLY MODERATE OPPOSITION HAS BECOME DISILLUSIONED AND POLARIZED BY GAIRY'S FAILURE TO MEET EARLIER DEMANDS FOR REFORM IN ADMINISTRATION OF POLICE AND JUSTICE. FACT THAT ONLY TWO POLICEMEN HAVE BEEN CHARGED BY LOCAL COMMISSION, AND NONE IN CONNECTION WITH NOVEMBER 18 INCIDENT, CONFIRMS BELIEF HELD BY NJM AND OTHERS THAT GOG WOULD MAKE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NO SERIOUS EFFORT TO COMPLY. STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO LORD BALNEIL, IF ACCURATE, WOULD SUGGEST HMG IS EITHER MISINFORMED OR IS DELIBERATELY ATTEMPTING TO IGNORE WORSENING SITUATION IN GRENADA.
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